

Appl. No. 10/720,557
Docket No. 9130M
Response dated April 30, 2010
Reply to Office Action mailed on October 30, 2009
Customer No. 27752

REMARKS

Claim Status

Claims 1-16 and 24-29 are pending in the present application.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) Over Mizutani In View Of Chu et al.

Claims 1-6, 8-12 and 24-26 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mizutani (EP 1,022,008 A2) in view of Chu et al. (GB 2,262,235 A). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Mizutani discloses an apertured topsheet divided into a central zone and a second zone outward of the central zone. The two zones of the topsheet of Mizutani are made of different materials, in particular the central zone is comprised of a thermoplastic film and the second zone is comprised of a thermoplastic nonwoven fabric (*see, e.g.*, col. 6, lines 8-9 and the Figures of Mizutani). The different materials are sealed along compressed grooves to form the topsheet of Mizutani.

Claims 1 and 8 specify that the facing layer is comprised of a fibrous nonwoven web and the first and second regions of the facing layer are both disposed in the same fibrous nonwoven web. Mizutani does not disclose or suggest a topsheet having two zones disposed in the same fibrous nonwoven web of material.

Claim 13 specifies that the individual rib-like elements have a length of between 1% and 20% of the length of the sanitary napkin. Mizutani does not disclose or suggest such rib-like elements. At most, Mizutani discloses rib-like elements that extend continuously across the entire length of the sanitary napkin.

Applicants submit that the disclosure of Chu et al. does not remedy these deficiencies of Mizutani with respect to the presently claimed invention.

In view of the discussion above, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1-6, 8-12 and 24-28 are unobvious and patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Mizutani in view of Chu et al.

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Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) Over Mizutani

Claims 13-16 and 28 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mizutani. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Based on the discussion above, Applicants submit that Claims 13-16 and 28 are similarly not taught or suggested by Mizutani. Therefore, Applicants submit that Claims 13-16 and 28 are unobvious and patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Mizutani.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) Over Mizutani in view of Ohashi et al.

Claims 7 and 29 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mizutani in view of Ohashi et al. (US 2002/0065498 A1). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Applicants submit that Ohashi et al. does not remedy the deficiencies of Mizutani with respect to the presently claimed invention. Applicants thus submit that Claims 13-16 and 28 are unobvious and patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Mizutani in view of Ohashi et al.

Conclusion

This response represents an earnest effort to place the present application in proper form and to distinguish the invention as claimed from the applied reference. In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of this application and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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